

MAY 18 2005

STATE PUBLICATIONS

## MARCH 1997

### VOLUME 14, NUMBER 3

#### SYNOPSIS

February and March were not only two of the driest 2nd and 3rd months back to back on record, but two of the warmest. All of this comes on the heels of one of the wettest December - Januarys in combination in much of the State. So what was a very wet winter season has deteriorated into only a little above normal in several places. In fact, some locations, such as Yerington (89%), Lovelock AP (92%), Austin (91%), and Ely (86%) are now below normal for the Water Year to date.

Back to March - using Reno as an example for the Northern half of the State and Las Vegas for the South - Since reliable records began in Reno 100 years ago, only two Marches have had less than the .01" for March 1997, as only trace fell in 1914 and 1988 (normal is .71"). Only 11 Marches have been warmer than the 46.7° (+ 4.0 normal) of this March, with March 1934 just plain toasty at 52.4°. March also finished with less snowfall than all but 1996 when none fell, as only a trace was recorded, the same as in 1994.

In the South it was the 6th warmest March on record in 50 years of Las Vegas Airport data collection (+ 6.4 normal) and one of only a few dry Marches.

#### TEMPERATURE

It was unusually warm Statewide with departures from normal in the +2 to +7 degree range above normal. Several locations had near record March warmth. Highs rose into the unseasonable 70 degree range in much of the North, with 80's in the South, and mid 90's near Lake Mead and the Colorado River (For example, Cottonwood Cove had 97°).

Extreme lows were generally in the 30's in the South, 20's in the Central area, teens in the west, and below zero in the far North. Wildhorse Reservoir had -19°, Ruth - 10°, Ely -9° and 8100 foot Lee Canyon near Las Vegas -6°.

The State records for March of 101° and -33° were not in danger.

### PRECIPITATION & EVAPORATION

Many locations had no precipitation during this unusually dry month. Highest recorded totals were in the Jarbidge Mountain area of Elko County, where Jarbidge had 2.11" and 19" of snowfall and Jarbidge Chapin, 7 miles north, had 1.71" and 21" of snowfall. These totals were still below normal.

Evaporation was well above normal during this mild month, but most pans were still stored for winter.

With half of the 1996-97 Water year finished, most of the State has had above normal precipitation totals. The Far West leads the way with over 1 & 1/2 times normal, the same as much of the Humboldt River Basin. The Southern 1/4 of Nevada has had below normal amounts, as has West Central and East Central parts of the State. Even though the South is much drier than usual, upstream Colorado River watersheds that flow into Lake Mead have had about 1 & 1/4 times normal precipitation.

NOTE: This month marks the 14th year of this monthly summary. We thank all those people who have made it possible.

### 10 Years Ago - April 1987

This was one of the warmest Aprils on record with departures up to 8 degrees above normal. Several locations had the warmest April on record. Some of those were Austin (records began 1887), Hawthorne (1888), Great Basin NP (1937), and Rye Patch Dam (1938). Reno (1888) missed a new record by just 0.2°. Logandale set an all time State April high at 105°.

John W. James  
State Climatologist

Bert Soileau, Cooperative Program Manager for the National Weather Service for most of Nevada for the past 18 years, will retire this summer after working for the Service for forty years. The cooperative volunteer weather observers that Bert has served will sorely miss his personal touch, as well as his professional skills in handling both routine and challenging duties connected with his office.

He has also been a great friend to the Nevada State Climate Program, readily sharing his expertise with us. Thanks Bert, your shoes will not be filled.

John W. James

Percentage of Normal  
Precipitation  
Oct. 1, 1996-March 31, 1997

